

Paper No.:

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor(s): Steven A. McAlister et al.

**Title: FLOW CONTROL VALVE FOR CONTINUOUS DISCHARGE
CENTRIFUGAL CONCENTRATORS**

Serial No.: 09/701,090

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Examiner: Charles E. Cooley Art Unit: 1723

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DEC 23 2002

GROUP 1700

Dear Sir:

AMENDMENT

Responsive to the Office Action mailed 06/20/2002, as extended by the accompanying petition for a three-month extension of time, kindly amend this application as follows:

IN THE ABSTRACT

Please add the following Abstract as a separate sheet:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Prior continuous discharge centrifugal concentrators for separating higher density particles from a slurry have used pinch valves to control the flow of discharge. Such pinch valves tend to be blocked by coarse particles, requiring shutdown of the machine. The present invention provides a muscle-type valve to provide a circular orifice for the valve bore of continuously variable perimeter.